

## **Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School's Rina Fishman Takes Top Prize in Gaithersburg Book Festival High School Poetry Contest**

**Gaithersburg, Md. – May 21, 2020** – Rina Fishman, a Rockville, Md., resident attending Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, was awarded first prize in the 2020 [Gaithersburg Book Festival poetry contest](#) for high school students for her poem "[13 Ways to Kill a Cactus](#)."

Second prize went to Poolesville, Md., resident Sarah Patch, who attends Poolesville High School, for "[Losing a Loved One: My First Five Thoughts](#)." Rockville, Md. resident, Lucy Shen, who attends Richard Montgomery High School, received third prize for "[Chunibyo](#)."

The Fan Favorite went to Trishelle Weed of Glen Burnie, Md., who attends Old Mill High School, for her poem "[Why Soo Serious?](#)"

Prizes for first-, second- and third-place winners, provided courtesy of [Johns Hopkins University Montgomery County](#), were \$250, \$100 and \$50, respectively, with the fan favorite winner receiving \$25.

Poetry critic and final contest judge Elizabeth Lund [announced the winners in a video](#) posted on the Gaithersburg Book Festival website and YouTube channel.

"This year's finalists didn't make my job easy. The creativity, originality and variety of their work was impressive and inspiring," Lund said. "Congratulations to all the winners and finalists, and to everyone who dares to dream. Poetry is needed now more than ever, and your work really matters."

To be eligible for the poetry contest, students had to be enrolled in grades 9-12 at a public or private school, or be in a homeschool program, for the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, entrants had to reside in Maryland, Virginia or the District of Columbia.

### **Virtual GBF – Now Through June 14**

Even though the festival couldn't take place in person this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, there's no stopping our annual celebration of great authors and great writing. Last weekend, we launched the [Virtual Gaithersburg Book Festival](#) (vGBF), which features live and pre-recorded programming with many of the authors who were set to appear in person, as well as activities for kids and a series of Wednesday writing workshops.

The vGBF will take place through June 14. The schedule is posted on the Festival website at [www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org](http://www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org). Subscribe to the [GBF YouTube channel](#) for easy access to all virtual content. You can also [subscribe](#) to the GBF newsletter and follow the Festival on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@GburgBookFest](#). Provided it is safe to gather in large numbers by then, the 2021 Gaithersburg Book Festival will take place on May 15.

The vGBF thanks its featured sponsor, [The David and Mikel Blair Family Foundation](#). The Festival is also sponsored in part by [Politics and Prose Bookstore](#), [Downtown Crown/RPAI](#), [Montgomery College](#), [Montgomery County Public Libraries](#), [Montgomery County Public Schools](#), the [Washington Independent Review of Books](#), and [Johns Hopkins University - Montgomery County Campus](#).

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